

REMARKS

A telephone discussion between the Examiner and Dennis Smid (one of the applicants' undersigned attorneys) was held on April 23, 2008. The applicants and Mr. Smid wish to thank the Examiner for his time and consideration for such discussion.

Claims 1, 3, and 6-8 have been canceled. Claims 2, 5, 9, and 10, amended claims 4 and 11, and new claim 12 are in this application.

Claims 2, 4, 5, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

As discussed during the April 23 discussion, each of independent claims 4 and 11 has been amended herein in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the above 112 rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 4, 5, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,344,729 (Akins et al.) in view of JP 57-178810 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,254,184 (Tsukagoshi et al.).

Independent claims 4 and 11 have been amended herein in the manner discussed during the April 23 discussion. For example, amended independent claim 4 now recites the following:

"A method for decorating a surface of a die usable a plurality of times so as to form a plurality of three-dimensional objects by a molding process, said method comprising the steps of:

spray coating the surface of the die with a photoresist;

vacuum molding a photomask into a same shape as a shape of said die which corresponds to a shape of the three-dimensional object;

sticking the photomask molded into said shape to said die coated with the photoresist; and

causing a pattern formed on said photomask to be formed onto said die,

in which the die having the pattern formed thereon is usable to form the plurality of three-dimensional objects each having the pattern formed thereon, and

wherein said pattern is formed on a surface of the photomask uniformly." (Emphasis added.)

Accordingly, claim 4 of the present application is directed to a method for decorating a surface of a die usable to form a plurality of three-dimensional objects which comprises steps of spray coating, vacuum molding a photomask, sticking and causing.

It is respectfully submitted that the applied combination of Akins, JP 57-178810 and Tsukagoshi does not appear to disclose the method specifically recited in claim 4 for at least the reasons herein below described.

First, and as discussed during the April 23 discussion, in explaining the above 103 rejection, the Examiner appears to rely on Akins to teach the step of molding. However, Akins does not appear to disclose "vacuum molding a photomask into a same shape as a shape of said die which corresponds to a shape of the three-dimensional object" as in claim 4. (Emphasis added.)

Second, and as discussed during the April 23 discussion, and as best understood, the Examiner appears to assert that lines 19-24 of column 10 of Tsukagoshi "describes using a patterned die to form a speaker." (See lines 1-2 of

page 5 of the present Office Action.) It is respectfully submitted that such portion of Tsukagoshi does not appear to describe using a patterned die (or a die having a pattern formed thereon) to form a speaker.

Third, and as best understood, the Examiner appears to rely on Akins to teach the feature of reusability. However, it is respectfully submitted that Akins does not appear to teach that a "die having the pattern formed thereon is usable to form the plurality of three-dimensional objects each having the pattern formed thereon," as in claim 4. (Emphasis added.) Instead, and as apparently acknowledged by the Examiner, Akins teaches a "reusable photomask." (See line 8 of page 4 of the present Office Action.) (Emphasis added.)

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of claim 4 be withdrawn. For similar or somewhat similar reasons, it is also respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of independent claim 11 be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 5, 9, and 10 are dependent from independent claim 4. Accordingly, it is also respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

New independent claim 12 is added herein.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been overcome, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections and/or rejections which the Examiner might have.

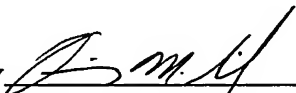
Application No.: 10/521,141

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If there are any charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Dennis M. Smid, Esq.
Registration No.: 34,930
LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG,
KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK, LLP
600 South Avenue West
Westfield, New Jersey 07090
(908) 654-5000
Attorney for Applicants

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